United States Department of Agriculture | Forest Service | Northeastern Area State & Private Forestry | 180 Canfield Street Morgantown, WV 26505-3101

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Subject: 2008 MNF Emerald Ash Borer Surveys

To: Clyde Thompson, Forest Supervisor
Monongahela National Forest

Clyde

Starting in May 2008, personnel from this office began surveying for the emerald ash borer on the Monongahela National Forest (MNF). This year's survey included the use of purple panel traps, site visits, visual surveys, campground questionnaires, and sweep net surveys. No signs of emerald ash borer were detected. However, the presence of emerald ash borer especially in its early stage of infestation is extremely difficult to detect. The accompanying map shows the general locations of this year's survey.

The emerald ash borer (EAB) is an invasive beetle that has been found in several States, including Pennsylvania, Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Maryland, and West Virginia. Since its accidental introduction sometime in the late 1990s, this beetle has caused millions of dollars in damage to ash trees across the Midwest, and has produced wide-ranging quarantines and regulations on movement of ash trees and firewood in the hopes of preventing further spread. The emerald ash borer impacts all North American species of ash trees, and may be spread over long distances through the transport of trees and wood products, such as nursery stock and firewood. In the fall of 2007, emerald ash borer larvae were collected by WVDA Plant Industries Division surveyors working in Fayette County, WV.

In late May, a prism trap was hung in host [ash] trees at six campgrounds throughout the MNF (table 1). These purple traps were baited to attract emerald ash borer adults and covered in a sticky material to catch flying adults. This prism trap survey was part of a multistate, multiagency effort with participation from numerous State agencies and universities, including State Agriculture and Forestry Divisions, the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, U.S. Forest Service, and other Federal agency lands throughout Ohio, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Maryland. Once again, we used site visits to identify campgrounds with ash trees and to look for the signs and symptoms of the emerald ash borer. During this survey, ash trees that showed symptoms of decline (yellow or offcolor foliage, epicormic sprouting) or dieback, or trees that died within the last 1 to 2 years, were inspected for D-shaped exit holes, vertical bark splits, and woodpecker activity. In addition, we added a sweep net survey and camper questionnaire to our sample protocol this year. Sweep net surveys involve sweeping the foliage of ash trees with a net and looking for feeding adult beetles. The camper questionnaire was used to obtain information about the amount and source of firewood (considered a potential pathway for EAB movement) used at the campground, along with the zip code of visitors.

No emerald ash borer was detected this year during any of our surveys. Five new campgrounds were visited this year, bringing the total number of campgrounds visited to 21 of the 36 campgrounds identified by your staff; of the campgrounds visited, 12 had ash trees (table 1).

Eight campgrounds were selected as questionnaire sites this year, and 28 campers consented to completing our questionnaire. The results from this limited sample show that 16 percent of the firewood brought to the MNF originated either from within Fayette County or from outside West Virginia. The questionnaire also revealed that 96 percent of campers use firewood during their stay, and, on average, they bring or buy about 40 pieces of firewood.

The emerald ash borer has become a major forest pest of ash in the Eastern United States. It cannot be stressed enough that this insect is coming, and decisions need to be made now to educate your staff and visitors about this insect. It is hoped that at the very least a communication plan can be developed to deal with this situation. Educational information about EAB is available on the World Wide Web (http://www.emeraldashborer.info/) and through this office and the West Virginia Department of Agriculture. It is hoped that this information will be used throughout the Forest. We would also request that your personnel work with this office to identify and survey ash resources located throughout the MNF.

Please remind District Rangers and other field-going personnel that they have the primary responsibility for on-the-ground, initial detection of insect and/or disease outbreaks. We ask that all field personnel continue to monitor for evidence of insect activity and tree defoliation, discoloration, and mortality in their areas, and report any insect and disease activity to the Morgantown Field Office.

If you or any of your staff have any questions or comments regarding this survey, please contact Rick Turcotte at (304) 285–1503.

Sincerely,

ROBERT G. LUECKEL
Field Representative
Morgantown Field Office

Enclosures

Cc: District Ranger, Cheat RD
District Ranger, Gauley RD
District Ranger, Greenbrier RD
District Ranger, Marlinton & White Sulphur Springs RDs
District Ranger, Potomac RD
Glen Juergens, Silviculturist
Cheri Hutchinson, WVDA

CG/RMT/AKS

Table 1. ***Monongahela National Forest Emerald Ash Borer Survey Information, through September 2008.***

Site*	Ash Present	Visited 2007	Visited 2008 (New Site)	Questionnaire Sites 08	Sweep Net Sites 08	Purple Trap Sites 08
Bear Heaven Campground		Y				
Bear Run Campsites						
Big Bend Campground	Yes	Y		Y	Y	Y
Big Rock Campground	Yes	Y		Y	Y	Y
Bird Run Campground		Y				
Bishop Knob Campground		Y				
Black Mtn Overflow Camping Area						
Blue Bend Campground	Yes	Y		Y		
Blue Meadow Campground					Y	Y
Camp Allegheny						
Cranberry Campground		Y				
Day Run Campground	Yes	Y		Y	Y	Y
Gatewood Campground						
Horseshoe Campground		Y				
Island Campground	Yes	Y			Y	Y
Jess Judy Camp Area						
Johnny Meadows Camping	Yes		Y	Y		
Lake Sherwood Group Campground	Yes	Y				
Laurel Fork Campground		Y				
Laurel Fork Campground						
Meadow Creek Loop Campground						
Middle Mountain Cabins						
North Bend Campground	Yes		Y			
North Bend Campsites	Yes		Y			
Pine Run Loop Campground						
Pocahontas Campground		Y				
Red Creek Campground	Yes		Y	Y		
Seneca Shadows Campground	Yes	Y		Y	Y	Y
Spruce Knob Lake Campground						
Stuart Family Campground		Y				
Stuart Group Campground						
Summit Lake Campground		Y				
Tea Creek Campground	Yes		Y	Y		
Third Bridge Campsites						
West Shore Loop Campground						
YMCA Camp Horseshoe						

*Y = Sites visited and surveyed by Morgantown Field Office, USDA Forest Service

Figure 1. – General locations of EAB surveys.